

DIRECTOR OF STAFF COUNSEL SERVICES

DEFINITION

Under administrative direction, plans, coordinates, and assigns the activities of a staff involved in legal research for Superior Court; performs legal research work on the most complex cases; and performs related duties as required.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

This is a single position class that has countywide and supervisory responsibilities, performs research on special projects as requested by the Judges or Court Executive Officer and oversees and consults on the most difficult assignments. This class is distinguished from the Supervising Judicial Staff Counsel in that the latter coordinates and supervises the full scope of cases and activities of a group of attorneys in a regionally defined area, consisting of two or more districts.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

1. Supervises the daily operations of the Judicial Staff Counsel Unit; provides budgetary and administrative input and support; maintains statistical, workload, and fiscal records; prepares reports and correspondence as needed.
2. Supervises attorneys involved in legal research, law interns, and clerical staff; prepares and signs work performance evaluations; assists in hiring and disciplinary actions of all subordinate levels.
3. Trains new attorneys in the techniques used for specialized legal research and analysis, and in the preparation of memoranda, documents, pleadings, and recommendations to the court.
4. Performs legal research work on the most difficult cases; advises judiciary and management on complex areas of law.
5. Manages research caseload for civil law and motion, family law, appeals, and probate; assigns and reviews work.
6. Maintains liaison with staff, Judges, management, and other departments or agencies; coordinates the activities of the different districts and other work units.

7. Conducts research on special projects requested by Judges or Court Executive Officers.
8. Conducts caseload analysis; studies work patterns and unit efficiency; develops and implements procedures to improve efficiency.
9. Performs related duties as assigned.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree, and five years of increasingly responsible professional level legal experience that included litigation or legal research in support of the judiciary including pertinent substantive experience sufficient to direct a large group of attorneys performing legal research and attendant administrative matters or any combination of training and experience that could provide the desired knowledge and abilities.

Special Requirement: Current active membership in the State Bar of California including maintaining compliance with mandatory continuing legal education (MCLE) requirements.

Knowledge of

Principles and practices of management and supervision applicable to developing and overseeing an internal professional practice; management practices and techniques including budgeting, organizational planning and analysis, personnel, project planning and supervision; program management practices and techniques; legal research methods and techniques; federal and state statutes and regulations impacting court operation; rules of evidence; scope and role of local court rules and procedures; conduct of proceedings in trial, appellate and United States courts; judicial ethics; case management, processing and calendaring practices within the local judicial system.

Ability to

Plan, organize and manage program operations and implement program revisions; supervise, train, and review the work of others; develop organizational expectations; monitor and support the work of professional staff; coordinate with other management staff to obtain needed resources and improve services and work processes; maintain flexible and cooperative attitude in working with judges, management and staff of the consolidated courts and outside agencies; make sound and objective decisions; evaluate program procedures and effectiveness; identify and analyze legal issues; research statutes and case law; conduct independent research of legal issues; apply legal principles to case facts and make decisions; prepare and present legal analyses and recommendations for judicial action, orally and in writing; confer with and advise judicial officers, attorneys, court support staff and the public on procedural and substantive legal issues; handle sensitive matters with finesse and discretion; work under pressure to deal with emergencies; tolerate frequent interruptions; coordinate work with others; listen to argument/discussion and understand underlying problem/question; recognize and respect

limit of authority and responsibility; uphold judicial ethics; work in an environment with conflicting priorities; use computer for legal research, word processing and communication.

Special Requirements

A California driver's license requirement will be reviewed on a position basis in accordance with ADA regulations.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Strength, dexterity, coordination and vision to use a keyboard and video display terminal on a daily basis. Hearing to communicate with the public and court staff. Dexterity and coordination to handle files and single pieces of paper; occasional lifting of objects weighing up to 25 lbs. such as files, stacks of papers, reference and other materials. Moving from place to place within an office; some reaching for items above and below desk level.

Date Est. 4/00